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THE IBERIAN PENINSULA AND THE TRANS-PYRENEAN WORLD:  
ASSESSING CULTURAL CHANGE THROUGH THE REPRESENTATIONS  
OF DRESS AND HORSEMANSHIP IN MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION\*

*LA PENÍNSULA IBÉRICA Y EL MUNDO TRANSPIRENAICO:  
ANALIZANDO TRANSFORMACIONES CULTURALES A TRAVÉS  
DE LAS REPRESENTACIONES DE INDUMENTARIA Y TÉCNICAS  
DE EQUITACIÓN EN LOS MANUSCRITOS ILUMINADOS*

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**Abstract:** Images preserved in medieval manuscripts can provide invaluable insights not only into the artistic and technical developments of a past society but also into its culture and identity. They are crucial forms of evidence for the examination of cultural and social change when documentary and archaeological sources are scarce. This article examines the representations of dress and horsemanship in illuminated manuscripts produced in the Iberian Peninsula from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and explores how they shed light onto critical cultural shifts across the period. It discusses how the transformations observed in the treatment of these elements reflect the accommodation of new trends into Iberian visual and material culture as a consequence of the intensification of the political and ecclesiastical connections between the Peninsula and the trans-Pyrenean world.

**Keywords:** visual culture; material culture; manuscript illumination; monasticism.

**Resumen:** Las iluminaciones preservadas en los manuscritos medievales pueden ofrecer valiosas perspectivas no solo de los desarrollos artísticos y técnicos de una sociedad histórica, sino también de su cultura y identidad, siendo fuentes privilegiadas para el estudio de los cambios culturales y sociales cuando faltan fuentes documentales y arqueológicas. Este artículo examina las representaciones de la indumentaria y de las técnicas de equitación en manuscritos iluminados producidos en la Península Ibérica desde el siglo X al XIII, explorando cómo arrojan luz sobre un importante cambio cultural a lo largo de este período; analiza cómo las transformaciones observadas en el tratamiento de estos elementos reflejan la adaptación de las nuevas tendencias en la cultura visual y material ibérica, como consecuencia de la intensificación de conexiones políticas y eclesíásticas entre la Península y el mundo transpirenaico.

**Palabras clave:** cultura visual; cultura material; manuscritos iluminados; monaquismo.

## SUMMARY

1. Introduction.— 2. Reassessing visual evidence: dress and military *impedimenta*.—  
3. Horsemanship.— 4. Concluding Remarks.— 5. Bibliography.

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1. INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Eleventh-century Iberia was characterised by momentous shifts in politics, religion and culture. The increasing temporal and spiritual alliances forged between the Iberian kingdoms and institutions outside the Peninsula led to the opening of this territory to the trans-Pyrenean world on an unprecedented scale<sup>2</sup>. The official abandonment of Hispanic liturgical and monastic practices in favour of the Roman customs at the councils of Coyanza (A.D. 1055) and Burgos (A.D. 1080) –a process mediated in this region by Cluniac monasticism– is held to be one of the principal contributors to the profound transformations witnessed in this period<sup>3</sup>, strengthening relations between the central and westernmost peninsular kingdoms with both the papacy and French monastic houses<sup>4</sup>. The concurrent intensification of pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint James in Compostela, accompanied by the development of stronger trade routes connecting northern Europe to the far west of the Peninsula, have also been posited as another key factor behind this phenomenon<sup>5</sup>: the *camino* has been regarded as a gateway to external trends that reached Iberia not only through the mediation of ecclesiastics and pilgrims but possibly also through the movement of skilled professionals who found in this route a source of labour opportunities<sup>6</sup>. These shifts, however, surpassed the ecclesiastical, political and intellectual spheres, having had a critical impact on Iberian visual and material culture.

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations used: ABM = Montecassino, Archivio della Badia; ACBO = Burgo de Osma, Archivo de la Catedral; ACL = León, Archivo Catedralicio; ASIL = León, Archivo Capitular de la Real Colegiata de San Isidoro; ANTT ML 44 = Lorvão *Beatus*, Lisbon, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Ordem de Cister, Mosteiro de Lorvão, códice 44; BAV = Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; BG = Genève, Bibliothèque de Genève; BL = London, British Library; BNE = Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España; BNF = Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France; BNUT = Turin *Beatus*, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, Segn. I. II. 1; BPP = Parma, Biblioteca Palatina; BUSC = Santiago de Compostela, Biblioteca Universitaria; Manchester, JRULM = John Rylands University Library; MAN = Madrid, Museo Arqueológico Nacional; MCG = Girona, Museu de la Catedral; MLM = New York, Morgan Library & Museum; RAH = Madrid, Real Academia de la Historia; RBME = El Escorial, Real Biblioteca de San Lorenzo; SPKB = Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz; SStG = St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek; WLS = Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek.

<sup>2</sup> Bishko 1961, 1980; Rucquoi 2010; Williams 1988; 1993b, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Henriot 2017; Reilly 1988, pp. 93-115; Rucquoi 2010; Walker 1998, pp. 23-38; 1988.

<sup>4</sup> See Franzé 2015; Quintavalle 2015; Reilly 1988, pp. 99-100; Walker 2015; Williams 1988. See also the article by A. Castro in this special issue.

<sup>5</sup> Moralejo Álvarez 1993.

<sup>6</sup> Moralejo Álvarez 1993; Rucquoi 2010, p. 105; Walker 1998, p. 37; Williams 1993a, pp. 170-171; 1993b, p. 22. The importance of the *camino* as a gateway for new artistic forms has, however, been re-evaluated in recent studies, in which greater emphasis is placed on the political and ecclesiastical networks established during the reform, see Walker 2015, p. 77.

What new light, then, can images preserved in manuscript sources shed on broader cultural transformation in this period of Iberian history? This article complements the discussion about change in intellectual and cultural paradigms explored in this special issue of the *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* by looking into the pictorial evidence offered by medieval manuscript sources from this milieu. While considering the broader panorama of Iberian manuscripts preserving pictorial cycles, particular attention is given to the illustrated copies of *Beatus* of Liébana's *Commentarium in Apocalypsin* from the late ninth to the thirteenth century as the most informative case studies. Their pictorial richness, relative iconographic coherence, and the fact that the extant twenty-nine illustrated witnesses are spread over a period of four centuries, commend them as prime documents for such an enquiry, enabling closer comparisons across the tradition as a whole to be made. The following sections analyse transformations in the representation of dress, especially military *impedimenta*, and equestrian figures in Iberian illuminated manuscripts over this period, viewing them against the general backdrop of western medieval figurative art, in order to explore their significance in the broader context of Iberian cultural history<sup>7</sup>.

## 2. REASSESSING VISUAL EVIDENCE: DRESS AND MILITARY *IMPEDIMENTA*

In her seminal work from 1956 *Indumentaria Medieval Española*—Carmen Bernis Madrazo provides a comprehensive survey of dress throughout the Iberian Middle Ages, identifying and cataloguing types of costumes based on the combined evidence of iconographic and textual sources<sup>8</sup>. Here as in subsequent works, greater detail is offered in relation to the better documented high and late Middle Ages than the period before A.D. 1200, for which material sources are scant<sup>9</sup>. While the basic transformations that occurred in this

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<sup>7</sup> For previous studies on representations of elements of Iberian material culture in early and late medieval manuscript, see Guerrero Lovillo 1949; Hernández Ferreirós 2016a, 2016b. For similar approaches in relation to the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman world, see Carver 1986; Gameson 1993, pp. 24–26; Lewis 2008.

<sup>8</sup> This article focuses primarily on the mechanisms of change in the visual representation of dress and horsemanship in Iberian illuminated manuscripts. A systematic analysis of the different types of dress and textiles used in this milieu is outside the scope of this work. For studies on medieval Iberian dress, see Bernis Madrazo 1956; Martínez 2003, 2012; Sousa Congosto 2007. On textiles, see Cabrera-Lafuente 1995; Feliciano 2014; Rodríguez Peinado 2013, 2017, 2019. Bernis Madrazo's work remains the principal special issue on the subject to analyse in depth early medieval Iberian dress.

<sup>9</sup> Concerning dress in the early and late Iberian Middle Ages, see Aragonés Estella 1999; Fresneda González 2013; García Marsilla 2007; Guerrero Lovillo 1949; Martínez 2003, 2012; Menéndez Pidal, Bernis Madrazo 1981; Rodríguez Peinado 2003; Sigüenza Pelarda 2001. For

respect during the early and high Middle Ages were well outlined in modern scholarship<sup>10</sup>, the mechanisms that contributed to the changes in question received little sustained attention. The illuminations preserved in medieval manuscripts, rich in representations of human and anthropomorphic figures exhibiting varied garb, provide significant evidence for the examination of these transformations and their importance in more detail.

The comparison between the earlier illuminated manuscripts (here considered as dating from the late ninth to the first half of the eleventh century) and later ones (from the late eleventh to the thirteenth century) reveals subtle but critical transformations in the representation of dress. Despite the schematic and often anti-naturalistic qualities of their illustrations, greater variety of designs can be identified in the earlier specimens<sup>11</sup>. This diversity has been explained by the unparalleled confluence of different cultures in the Peninsula which contributed to the emergence of a symbiotic approach to dress, one in which classical and late Roman designs (which formed the basis of Western medieval dress more generally) coexisted with putative native developments deriving from the Visigothic and Islamic dress styles<sup>12</sup>. Illuminations preserved in tenth-century manuscripts provide numerous examples of such coexistence. Both saintly and high-status figures are mostly shown in long loose-fitting tunics combined with cloaks or mantles, closely resembling the dress styles of antiquity, in particular the Roman *pallium* and the *chlamys*<sup>13</sup> (fig. 1 c). Other miniatures reveal what seems to be a combination of superimposed tunics varying in design and length, a trend which, according to Bernis, was characteristic of medieval Iberian dress<sup>14</sup>.

Secular and lower-ranking figures, by contrast, reveal a more pronounced variety of dress. The Morgan *Beatus* alone features several corroborative examples: in the episode of Christ's epiphany on the cloud (f. 26r), the Christian onlookers wear knee-length tunics with loose sleeves,

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general works on dress in the western Middle Ages, see Owen-Crocker 1986; Paterson 2011; Tramontana 2012; Miller 2014; Martin, Weetch 2017.

<sup>10</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956; Sousa Congosto 2007.

<sup>11</sup> As also noted by Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 15.

<sup>12</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, pp. 9-11.

<sup>13</sup> These two types of outer garments have been identified in Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, XIX. Their modern translation into English has been qualified as *pallium* = cloak, and *chlamys* = mantle, see Barney, *et al.* 2006, p. 386; see also Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 10. For examples of this type of dress, see RBME, Cod. d. I. 2, f. 428r; RBME, Cod. d. I. 1, f. 129v; ACL, Cod. 8, ff. 39v, 79r, 103r; ASIL, Ms. II, ff. 129r, 138v. Further examples may be found throughout the illuminations of the tenth-century *Beatus* manuscripts. For facsimile editions, see García Turza 2000; Vinayo González 1999; Vive, Brou 1953-1959.

<sup>14</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 12. See examples in MLM, MS. M. 644, ff. 79r, 118r, 156r; León, Archivo Catedralicio, Cod. 8, ff. 1v, 68r; ASIL, Ms. II, f. 474v.

combined with short mantles and leggings (fig. 1 a). Similar types of tunics can be observed in other illuminations in this manuscript; however, these present marked variations not only in their fitting (some worn loose, others girded with a belt), but also in their sleeves (some loose and voluminous, others sleek and close-fitting at the wrists, while others are sleeveless)<sup>15</sup>. This last type is also found in the tenth-century Girona *Beatus* as a garb of laymen<sup>16</sup>. The tunic in question has been identified as the costume described in coeval Christian documentary sources as the *mutebag*: a garment of Islamic provenance but which was also worn within the context of the northern Christian communities of Iberia<sup>17</sup>. Further examples of dress styles of possible Islamic origin are found in this manuscript used both for sacred and secular figures. In the parapoapocalyptic illumination of Christ's crucifixion (f. 16v), the Roman soldiers wear girded tunics with pronounced clefts that reveal their bare legs; this clothing has been tentatively identified as the *mofarrage* (fig. 1 b)<sup>18</sup>.

Worn together with these shorter tunics, hose or leggings also form part of the attire of secular figures. While some are tight and straight, a more distinctive type of legwear resembling the *sirwal* (a type of wide-legged trousers worn by both male and female across the Middle East) can also be observed in the earlier manuscripts (figs. 1 c; 2). Similarly, to the tenth-century counterparts, the Facundus *Beatus* (A.D. 1047) includes several depictions of this garment. The miniature representing the slaughter of the two witnesses (f. 246v) offers a suitable example: the Antichrist and his entourage are depicted wearing short loose tunics combined with short cloaks (possibly a type identified by Bernis as the *mantum hispani*<sup>19</sup>) and a knee-length version of the wide-legged trousers (fig. 1 d). Similar dress can be found in a variety of manuscripts from the tenth century, including in the *First Bible* of León (A.D. 960) and the Antiphon of the Cathedral of León (mid-tenth century)<sup>20</sup>. Although no specific term for this garment is found in the extant coeval sources, Francisco de Sousa Congosto suggests that these may be a regional

<sup>15</sup> For further examples, see MLM, MS. M. 644, ff. 200r, 203r, 211r, 260r.

<sup>16</sup> For representations of sleeveless tunics, see MCG, Num. Inv. 7 (11), f. 15v; MLM, MS. M. 644, f. 260r.

<sup>17</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 12; see also Martínez 2012. Concerning Arabic terminology for dress, see Serrano-Niza 1998, 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, pp. 11-12. See further examples in MCG, Num. Inv. 7 (11), ff. 15v, 34r, 103r, 131v, 166r, 167v, 193v-194r, 216, 223v.

<sup>19</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> Respectively: ASIL, Ms. II, ff. 131v, 135v, 138v; ACL, Cod. 8, ff. 83v, 234v, 235v. Further examples of this garb are observed in an anthropomorphic initial of the *Lives of the Fathers* (A.D. 902), BNE, MSS 10007, f. 63v and in a late tenth-century copy of Cassiodorus' *Expositio in Psalmos*, RAH, Cód. 8, f. 15v.

development of the Roman *femoralia*<sup>21</sup>. A more compelling case can, however, be made for a link with Islamicate dress style: similar pieces can be found not only in contemporary Islamic figurative art from al-Andalus, but also in late medieval textual sources describing Muslim dress in Granada<sup>22</sup>. Yet more significant than the question of the origin of such garb is perhaps the fact that there is no visual and/or material evidence that they were current in north of the Pyrenees in this period<sup>23</sup>.

Iberian illuminated manuscripts produced from the last decades of the eleventh century onwards show significant differences with regard to dress. Perhaps the most evident change is the overall lack of variety in comparison with the earlier specimens<sup>24</sup>. While the dress of holy and high-status figures does not differ greatly from what was represented in earlier pictorial works, that of secular characters reveals considerable transformations. It is now characterised by greater uniformity<sup>25</sup>: most figures wear tightly fitted tunics, particularly in the neckline and wrists, often girded with belts, creating a pleated effect in the abdominal area<sup>26</sup> (fig. 1 g). Hose are still part of this new attire; however, the *sirwal* (wide-legged trousers) has been invariably replaced by leggings (fig. 1 e, f, h). Once again, the *Beatus* manuscripts offer important corroborative evidence that illustrate these shifts. The first extant Iberian copy to include these new features is the Osma *Beatus*: a manuscript produced in the monastery of Sahagún in A.D. 1086, the period immediately preceding the official adoption of the new liturgical rite in the Peninsula<sup>27</sup>. While preserving one of the oldest pictorial models within the *Beatus* tradition<sup>28</sup>, this manuscript is the first within the corpus to exhibit a more “modern” aesthetic, having been

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<sup>21</sup> Sousa Congosto 2007, p. 56.

<sup>22</sup> Representations of this type of garb can be observed in a variety of Islamic Andalusí artefacts, such as the “Burgo de Osma silk” (ca. A.D. 1100), the “Arqueta de Silos” (ca. A.D. 1026), and the so-called capital of the musicians (late tenth-century) held in the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum of Córdoba. For the corresponding images, see O’Neill 1993, pp. 86, 108–109, 273–276, catalogue n.º 31, 60, 132 (respectively). For a fifteenth-century account of Granadan dress style, see Martínez 2012, pp. 197–198.

<sup>23</sup> This is further corroborated by Bernis’ investigation which also concludes that Iberian dress in the tenth and early eleventh centuries was considerably different from what was current in the trans-Pyrenean world, see Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 11. Concerning the particular aesthetic vocabulary of early medieval Iberia, see Williams 1993b.

<sup>24</sup> As also noted by Bernis Madrazo 1956, pp. 14–15.

<sup>25</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, pp. 14–15.

<sup>26</sup> A clear depiction of this type of tunic is found in the Lorrão *Beatus* in a variety of lengths, demonstrating that they could also be shortened with the aid of a belt: ANTT ML 44, ff. 49r, 54r, 149v. For facsimile edition of this manuscript, see Klein 2003.

<sup>27</sup> ACBO, Cod. 1. For facsimile edition, see Shailor, *et al.* 1993. Concerning the relationship between Sahagún and Cluny, see Walker 1998, pp. 141–142, 196, 217.

<sup>28</sup> Klein 1980, p. 95.



described as the first Romanesque *Beatus*, in which the schematism and rigidity characteristic of the earlier copies was abandoned in favour of more sinuous and elongated forms<sup>29</sup>. In addition to its pictorial style, the representation of dress in this manuscript is one of the features that shows the clearest signs of iconographic updating in relation to the previous copies<sup>30</sup>.

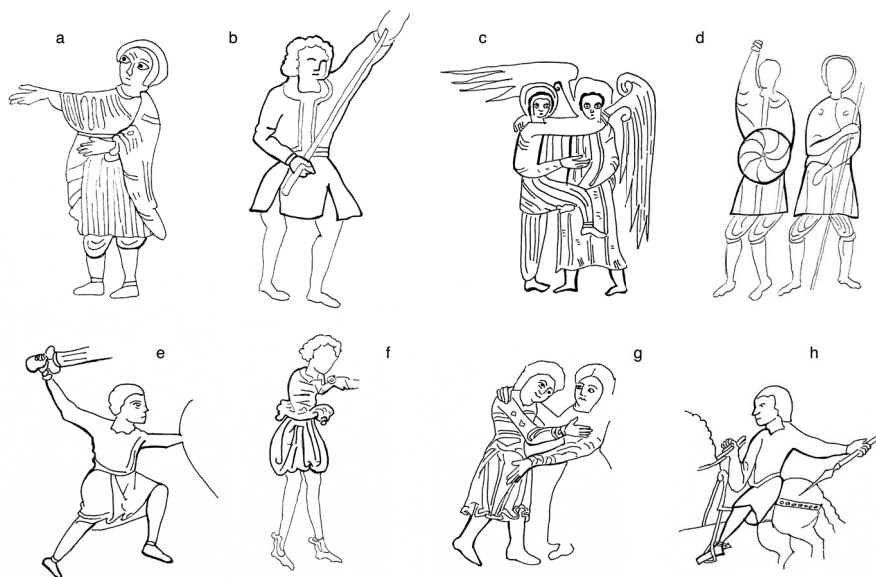


Fig. 1. a) knee-length tunic with wide sleeves in a figure in the Morgan *Beatus* (f. 26v); b) possible representation of a *mofarrage* in the Girona *Beatus* (f. 16v); c) wide-legged trousers (*sirwal*) worn by Jacob and the angel wearing a long loose-fitting tunic in the First Bible of León (f. 8r); d) knee-length version of the wide-legged trousers in two figures in the Facundus *Beatus* (f. 246v); e) short tunic with fitted sleeves and leggings in a warrior figure in the Turin *Beatus* (f. 163v); f) tunic shortened with a belt in a figure in the Lorvão *Beatus* (f. 149v); g) fitted tunic with drapery in the abdominal area in the Second Bible of León (f. 4v); h) horsemen riding a *brida* in the Turin *Beatus* (f. 96v). The copyright for the line drawings rests with the author of this work.

<sup>29</sup> Walker 1998, p. 96; Williams 2002, pp. 20-21. One of the earliest extant manuscripts to reflect the penetration of Romanesque style in the central Iberia is the so-called prayer book of Fernando I (BUSC, Ms. Res. I) dating from A.D. 1055. See Díaz y Díaz 1995; Martín 2006, pp. 58-59; Moralejo Álvarez 2004b.

<sup>30</sup> On the methods of copying illuminated manuscripts, in particular Iberian Bibles, see García de Asís, Hernández Ferreirós 2018; Hernández Ferreirós 2012, 2016a, 2016b. Concerning approaches to artistic creation and copying in the Iberian Middle Ages more generally, see Moralejo Álvarez 2004a.



These transformations become all the more evident when analysing related manuscripts, such as mother-daughter copies of Girona and Turin *Beatus* and the two Bibles of San Isidoro of León. The *Beatus* in question, produced in A.D. 975 and in the early twelfth century respectively<sup>31</sup>, demonstrate that, despite their almost identical iconographic programmes, they differ markedly in terms of the representation of several elements that were part of the material culture in which they were produced. Dress style is one of such elements, having been visibly updated in the later copy<sup>32</sup>. Similar adaptations are also visible in yet later *Beatus* copies which arguably followed much earlier exemplars. The Lorrain *Beatus* (A.D. 1189) is one of them: while preserving one of the most archaic pictorial models within the tradition<sup>33</sup>, it shows that its makers strived for the modernisation of dress and other material elements depicted therein (fig. 3).

More striking are the differences in the rendition of military accoutrements. While in most of the extant miniatures preserved in early Iberian manuscripts horsemen are represented as spiritual or visionary riders, the details and the nature of their garb change significantly from the end of the eleventh century onwards. For instance, knights and horsemen in earlier illuminated manuscripts, such as the *First Bible* of León (A.D. 960) and the early *Beatus*, wear long and loose garb, including the wide-legged trousers as part of their riding attire (fig. 2). This mode of representation was apparently current in the central and western parts of the Peninsula until at least the mid-eleventh century, as the last extant *Beatus* manuscript to feature them is the Leonese copy of *Facundus* (A.D. 1047)<sup>34</sup>. Substantial variations are visible thereafter. Horsemen are now rendered in two distinctive ways: either wearing a long tight tunic (similar to that worn by other secular figures in these manuscripts) combined with leggings and pointed shoes<sup>35</sup> (figs. 1 h; 3) or, alternatively, with knee-length chainmail hauberks –possibly *lorigas*– combined with leggings; in a number of instances, some figures wear what

<sup>31</sup> Respectively: MCG, Num. Inv. 7 (11); BNUT; ASIL, Ms. II; ASIL, Ms. III. 3. For facsimile edition of the *Beatus* copies, see Cámon Aznar, *et al.* 1975; Herrero Jiménez 2000.

<sup>32</sup> These iconographic variations between the two copies are briefly highlighted in Cid, Vigil 1965. On the historical and codicological features of these copies, see Williams 1994b, pp. 50–64 and 2002, pp. 26–30.

<sup>33</sup> ANTT ML 44. On the antiquity of the model of the Lorrain *Beatus*, see Klein 2003, pp. 39–42; 2014, pp. 14, 23.

<sup>34</sup> BNE, MS. VITR 14/2; see facsimile edition Garcia Leal 2007; see also Williams 1998, pp. 34–40.

<sup>35</sup> ANTT ML 44, ff. 108v, 115r, 144r, 198r; BL, Add. MS. 11695, f. 196r; BNF, nouv. Acq. Lat. 1366, ff. 133r, 141r; BNF, nouv. acq. lat. 2290, ff. 70v, 152r, 154r, 157v; BG, Ms. lat. 357, ff. 183v, 235r; JRULM, MS. lat. 8, ff. 103v, 133r, 187r, 206v; MLM, MS. M. 429, ff. 71v, 94r; BNUT, ff. 15v, 96v, 189v.

have been identified as chainmail hose<sup>36</sup>. Conical helmets with nasal guards, unwitnessed in earlier Iberian illuminated works, also become part of the impedimenta associated with these characters<sup>37</sup>. Once again, the Girona and Turin *Beatus* and the two Bibles of San Isidoro of León offer striking evidence for these transformations: in the earlier manuscripts (Girona *Beatus* and the *First Bible* of León), these equestrian figures are depicted wearing wide and voluminous garb, including the *sirwal* trousers, while those in the later manuscripts (Turin *Beatus* and *Second Bible* of León) are rendered with the new impedimenta characteristic of the later copies<sup>38</sup>. Another significant source through which to examine these transformations is the San Millán *Beatus*: a manuscript which was partially illustrated in the tenth century and resumed and completed in the mid-twelfth, thus exhibiting illustrations from two distinct periods. While no depictions of horsemen survive in the tenth-century images, the remaining figures broadly reflect the style and modes of representations observed across the tenth-century *Beatus* specimens. By contrast, the later miniatures in this copy demonstrate that horsemen are rendered with the new accoutrements observed in later illuminated manuscript<sup>39</sup>.

When considering the broader panorama of medieval figural art, close parallels can be drawn between details in the images preserved in later Iberian manuscripts and non-Iberian works from the ninth century onwards. Knights and warriors wearing different types of chainmail hauberks –which are only observed in the twelfth and thirteenth-century Iberian manuscripts– are already present in Carolingian manuscripts, including the Stuttgart Psalter and the Golden Psalter of Saint Gallen<sup>40</sup>. Yet images produced in the regions corresponding to the former *Marca Hispanica* introduced these features earlier

<sup>36</sup> SPKB, MS. theol. lat. fol. 561, ff. 64v, 65r, 86v, 90r; BL, Add. MS. 11695, ff. 102v, 136r, 194r, 223r; BNF, nouv. acq. lat. 2290, ff. 100v, 106v; BG, Ms. lat. 357, f. 203v; MLM MS. M. 429, ff. 149v, 162r; BNUT, f. 123r. In addition, the *Second Bible of León* and the thirteenth-century Bible of San Millán de la Cogolla bear similar representations, see ASIL, Ms. III. 1, f. 131v; RAH, Cod. 2, ff. 120r, 161v, 170v, 181v. For the different types of mail coats used in medieval Iberia, see Powers 1988, p. 128.

<sup>37</sup> Regarding the evolution of medieval military helmets and their depiction in manuscript sources, see Lewis 2008, pp. 113–114; Powers 1988, p. 129. The former author states that there is no evidence in the Anglo-French context for the use of conical helmets with nasal guards in manuscript sources prior to the twelfth century; however, the eleventh-century Saint-Sever *Beatus* already exhibits an example of this typology, see BNF, MS. lat. 8878, f. 148v.

<sup>38</sup> See examples BNUT, ff. 15v, 96v, 123r, 189v; ASIL, Ms. III. 1, f. 131v.

<sup>39</sup> RAH, Cod. 33, f. 149r. For the history and features of this copy, see Díaz y Díaz 2002; Williams 1998, pp. 21–28.

<sup>40</sup> Respectively: WLS, Cod. bibl. f. 23; SSStG, Cod. Sang. 22. For facsimile editions see Eggenberger 1987; Bischoff, Fischer, Hoffmann 1968.

than did those in the western and north-central parts of the Peninsula<sup>41</sup>. The two Bibles produced in the Catalanian monastery of Santa Maria de Ripoll in the first half of the eleventh century testify to this phenomenon, featuring the dress styles and the accoutrements which were seemingly only introduced in the manuscript illumination produced in the central and western peninsular kingdoms decades later<sup>42</sup>. In fact, of the *Beatus* manuscripts dating from the first half of the eleventh century, only the copies of Saint-Sever (ca. A.D. 1028-1072) and of Geneva (mid-eleventh century) already present these “new” dress styles and accoutrements<sup>43</sup>. However, these seemingly precocious features can be justified by the fact that these are two of the very few witnesses to have been produced outside the Iberian Peninsula, originating from the monastery of Saint-Sever sur l’Adour in Gascony and southern Italy (respectively), which therefore does not alter the pattern we see there, but rather highlights the marked differences between the modes of representation in Iberia and the trans-Pyrenees before the end of the eleventh century.

### 3. HORSEMANSHIP

While the representations of horsemen and knights in medieval Iberian manuscripts do not permit a detailed assessment of equestrian equipment due to their schematic quality, they show significant transformations over time that extend beyond dress and impedimenta of their riders<sup>44</sup>. There would seem to be two distinct manners of portrayal corresponding to the date of production. In early Iberian manuscripts, horsemen are generally depicted in one particular riding posture: they are perfectly placed in the centre of the saddle, being well supported by the pommel and cantle, their knees bent, their legs withdrawn, and their feet resting close to the horses’ abdomens. This type of depiction appears in several tenth-century illuminated manuscripts, including the *First Bible* of León, the *Beatus* copies of Morgan, Valladolid, Urgell, Escorial and Girona, as also in the eleventh-century *Facundus Beatus*

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<sup>41</sup> On the development of artistic trends in the region of Catalonia in this period, see Klein 1993, pp. 185, 189-190.

<sup>42</sup> BAV, MS. Vat. lat. 5729 ; BNF, MS. lat. 6. See facsimile edition Mundó 2002.

<sup>43</sup> BNF, MS. lat. 8878. For facsimile edition, see Klein, Werckmeister 2012; on the history and features of this manuscript, see also Schlafer, Laffitte 1997, pp. 80-90.

<sup>44</sup> Changes in riding postures due to transformations in martial techniques in eleventh-century Iberia have been briefly mentioned in Powers 1988, pp. 128-129. Previous work on the representation of horsemen in the *Beatus* manuscripts include Werckmeister 1997 and Williams 2004; however, they have solely focused on the illuminations of the horseman stepping on the serpent (f. 134v) and Herod (f. 15v) and their meaning in the tenth-century Girona *Beatus*.

(fig. 2), whose illuminator also included stirrups (set high and attached by fine leather straps) and occasionally spurs in the equestrian figures. Whatever the degree of naturalism achieved, knights and horsemen are invariably depicted in the same position in the extant pre-A.D. 1100 works.

Horsemen in copies dating from the first years of the twelfth century, by contrast, were rendered according to a different convention and often with a greater sense of naturalism. Whilst still showing some flexion in their knees (as is natural to the riding movement), they now have straighter legs, resting their feet in much lower stirrups that reach below the horses' abdomens; in several images the knights project their feet, and themselves, forward on the horses' bodies (figs. 1 h; 3). Even in cases where stirrups were not represented, the horsemen display a straight-legged posture. The Silos *Beatus* exhibits several instances of this type, seen in the illustrations of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse (f. 102v), of the knights in the siege of Jerusalem in the Daniel cycle (f. 223r), and in other equestrian figures in this manuscript (ff. 136v, 170r)<sup>45</sup>.

A comparison between the tenth-century Girona and the twelfth-century Turin *Beatus* offers telling evidence about the changes in the representation of horsemen over time: the "bent-knee" posture present in the former was replaced with the "straight-legged" technique in the later specimen, even in depictions of fantastical riders, when knights ride beasts instead of horses (f. 123r). The two León Bibles provide yet another suitable example to compare earlier and later approaches. As mother and daughter copies produced almost two centuries apart, differences in the form in which horsemen are represented are also conspicuous: in the tenth-century specimen they are represented in a "bent-legged" posture (ff. 118r, 119r, 142r), whilst in the twelfth-century one they are depicted in a "straight-legged" position (ff. 130v, 131v, 141v).

Evidence about equestrian techniques and gear in the early medieval West is scant. The dearth of early works presumably reflects the fact that most knowledge was possibly transmitted orally. One of the earliest specialised treatises on equestrianism to survive from an Iberian context dates from *ca.* A.D. 1430 and was composed by Dom Duarte, king of Portugal (d. A.D. 1438)<sup>46</sup>. Albeit late in date, this work offers invaluable insight into the features observed in the

<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, it was not possible to include images of the Silos *Beatus* when this article was sent to print due to the closure of the imaging services at the British Library (London), owing to Covid 19. To access the digital facsimile visit: [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add\\_ms\\_11695\\_f005v](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_11695_f005v).

<sup>46</sup> Although earlier Iberian works survive, namely the *Libro del fecho de los Cavallos* (dating from the thirteenth century) and Manuel Díez's *Llibre de Menescalía* (*ca.* mid-fifteenth century), they are primarily veterinary manuals for the care of equines. A modicum of information about horse riding can, however, be found in these texts. See Cifuentes, Ferragud 1999; Montoya 1994; Sachs 1938, especially pp. 298-230; for facsimile edition, see Manuel Díez 1991.

Iberian illuminated manuscripts. In his *Livro da Ensinança de Bem Cavalgar Toda a Sela*, the monarch compiles traditional knowledge of this “art” for the instruction of new knights in the different disciplines of horsemanship<sup>47</sup>. Amongst the various techniques described therein, two seem to correspond to what is observed in the medieval illustrations: first, a technique described as *Dos que andam firmes e alto nas strebeiras* (those who stand firmly and high on the stirrups); and second *Do cavalgar com pernas encolhydas* (riding with withdrawn legs)<sup>48</sup>. Accordingly, the first technique referred to consisted of riding firmly with a straight body and outstretched legs and leaning slightly forward while supported by the pommel of the saddle<sup>49</sup>. The second was described as a technique in which the horseman is supported by short stirrups in order to keep both legs and knees contracted<sup>50</sup>, enabling the rider to sit perfectly in the centre of the saddle; this specific type of saddle was named *gineta*, a term of Arabic origin<sup>51</sup>.

Recent studies by Carlos Henriques Pereira have established correspondences between this late medieval treatise and early modern sources in which two terms arose for these techniques: *a la gineta* (corresponding to the withdrawn-legs riding technique) and *a la brida* (the straight-legs style), both terms coined due to the type of saddles used<sup>52</sup>. The *a la gineta* style has been interpreted to be of Maghrebi origin, and possibly dating back to the early Middle Ages; it was suited to lighter cavalry which, in a martial context, privileged speed and manoeuvrability<sup>53</sup>. In fact, parallels to this riding technique may be observed in Muslim Andalusí art, such as in the carvings of the eleventh-century Játiva basin and in the ivory panels of the Leyra and Silos caskets (ca. A.D. 1004-05 and A.D. 1026, respectively) which include Muslim knights and hunters. Moreover, Otto Karl Werckmeister has argued that the posture in which some of these horsemen are represented in the *First Bible* of León (turning backwards in the saddle in a fashion apparent in Sassanid art) should be interpreted as a conscious allusion to Islam and, therefore, to the Christian-Muslim conflict<sup>54</sup>. Here, the illuminator even exaggerated the feature of the withdrawn legs to an unrealistic (and physically impossible) degree in some of these figures, possibly as an identifier for the Muslim riders, thus strengthening this hypothesis, as well as supporting the association of the

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<sup>47</sup> Piel 1986; for the English translation, see Forgeng 2016.

<sup>48</sup> Piel 1986, pp. 17-19.

<sup>49</sup> Piel 1986, p. 17; Pereira 2001, pp. 89-90.

<sup>50</sup> Piel 1986, p. 18.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>52</sup> Pereira 2001, pp. 89-94.

<sup>53</sup> Pereira 2001, p. 92; Powers 1988, p. 133.

<sup>54</sup> See, for instance, ASIL, Ms. II, ff. 119r, 131v; see also Werckmeister 1993, p. 122.

riding style with a north African origin. Yet the other horsemen depicted in this Bible also share the posture seen in the early *Beatus* manuscripts associated with Christian and righteous knights: legs withdrawn, knees realistically bent and kept close to the horse in short stirrups (fig. 2)<sup>55</sup>. In Dom Duarte's treatise, the north African origin of this technique is also implied<sup>56</sup>; however, perhaps more significant is the fact that recent scholarship has identified that this riding style was historically considered to be an Iberian technique until the early modern period, when it was adopted in other parts of Europe<sup>57</sup>. Although the first written evidence about the *a la gineta* technique in the Peninsula is found in the Chronicle of Alfonso X, commissioned by Alfonso XI (A.D. 1311-1350)<sup>58</sup>, earlier pictorial monuments reveal that this, or at least a similar riding style, was already practised in this milieu in an earlier period.



Fig. 2. © Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, VITR/14/2, f. 135r.  
Facundus *Beatus*, Opening of the fourth seal.

<sup>55</sup> ASIL, Ms. II, f. 150v.

<sup>56</sup> Piel 1986, p. 20.

<sup>57</sup> Concerning the different types of saddle, how they determined the different riding techniques and when they were adopted, see Pereira 2001, pp. 11, 92, 131-132.

<sup>58</sup> Pereira 2001, p. 93.



The origin of the *a la brida* technique (the outstretched legs style) has been assigned to a completely different context. Pereira remarked that it was developed in northern Europe as a manner suited to heavy cavalry<sup>59</sup>. He goes on to state that this technique was already known in Iberia in the eleventh century; however, no further corroborative evidence is provided<sup>60</sup>. Iberian illuminated manuscripts reflect this change at a slightly later date: for instance, the only two complete eleventh-century illustrated *Beatus* produced in the Peninsula –Facundus (A.D. 1047) and Osma (A.D. 1086)– still exhibit horsemen riding in a bent-knees position<sup>61</sup>. As far as the extant witnesses are concerned, the “new” riding technique first appears in this corpus, as in medieval Iberian manuscript illumination more generally, from the early years of the twelfth century, as testified by the case of the Silos *Beatus*, whose illuminations were completed in A.D. 1109. Some of the most accurate depictions of this technique can be observed yet in later copies, such as the *Second Bible* of León (A.D. 1162), the Lorrvão *Beatus* (A.D. 1189), and the Bible of San Millán de la Cogolla (ca. 1200)<sup>62</sup>. In the first manuscript, king Solomon rides towards the city with perfectly outstretched legs and feet resting on low stirrups (f. 141v), while in the Lorrvão *Beatus*, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse (f. 108v) as well as an unidentified knight holding a bow (f. 115r) are represented in a series of postures that this riding style would permit when adopting different gaits: some riders stand firmly in the stirrups with outstretched legs and raise their bodies slightly from the saddle, while others ride leaning forward with their legs resting straight in long stirrups when cantering (fig. 3).

Comparison of these manuscripts with trans-Pyrenean visual sources supports the association of this equestrian technique with northern Europe. It can already be clearly identified, for example, in the illuminations of the aforementioned Golden Psalter of St. Gallen as well as in an eleventh-century copy of Hrabanus Maurus’s *De Rerum Naturis* from Montecassin<sup>63</sup>. Furthermore, later representations preserved in different media, such as the *Bayeux Tapestry* and the ivory figures of the so-called “Charlemagne chess set” also show their knights *a la brida*, while exhibiting heavy armour and

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<sup>59</sup> Pereira 2001, p. 90.

<sup>60</sup> Pereira 2001, pp. 89, 119.

<sup>61</sup> The case of the Osma *Beatus* is less clear than that of *Facundus*, given that horsemen exhibit long draped tunics which prevent a clear assessment. The position of their lower limbs nevertheless suggests the bent-knees position and their feet rest at the level of the horse’s abdomen, corresponding to what we observe in the earlier copies.

<sup>62</sup> RAH, Cod. 2, ff. 170v, 181v, 198v, 213v, 214r.

<sup>63</sup> Respectively: SSStG, Cod. 22, ff. 132v, 140v, 141r; ABM, 132, ff. 383r, 474r. On the latter manuscripts see Orofino 2000, pp. 50–86; see also Powers 1988, p. 133.



weaponry<sup>64</sup>. The currency of the technique north of the Pyrenees prior to the late eleventh and early twelfth century is further underlined by the fact that the only *Beatus* copies that exhibit it are those of Saint-Sever and of Geneva: both specimens produced outside the Peninsula, the former in Gascony *ca.* A.D. 1038-1072, and the latter in late eleventh-century southern Italy<sup>65</sup>. In addition, akin to the case of dress and military accoutrements, it is in the region of Catalonia –the area south of the Pyrenees most exposed, and from an earlier period, to Frankish influence– that these first appear in the Iberian pictorial repertoire: both Ripoll Bibles represent their knights and horsemen thus<sup>66</sup>. From this evidence we may therefore infer that, at some point in the transition to the twelfth century, a change occurred in the iconography of the knight in the Peninsula, reflecting perhaps the arrival of new “real-world” practices from across the Pyrenees. Once again, the two mother and daughter León Bibles offer important evidence: while the earlier specimen shows horsemen riding with their knees bent and contracted legs, reflecting the Iberian tradition –possibly *la gineta* style– its direct copy from A.D. 1162 updates both the material elements and the riding techniques, exhibiting knights with heavy armour and riding *a la brida*<sup>67</sup>. Further visual evidence for this phenomenon can be observed in a variety of artistic media, though most conspicuously in monumental sculpture. A ninth-century relief in the belvedere of Santa Maria del Naranco in Oviedo, albeit highly schematic, apparently shows two knights riding with withdrawn legs (*a la gineta*), while the carvings of knights on the capitals of the twelfth-century palace of the dukes of Granada in Navarra, and in the twelfth-century triumphal arch in the church of Santa María de Retortillo, in Cantabria, are represented in a straight-leg posture, *a la brida*<sup>68</sup>.

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<sup>64</sup> Concerning the Bayeux Tapestry, see Lewis 2008; concerning Charlemagne’s chess, see Pastoureaux 1990.

<sup>65</sup> BG, Ms. lat. 357, ff. 183v, 203v, 235r. For facsimile edition, see Siloé 2011; Williams 2017, pp. 149-271.

<sup>66</sup> BAV, MS. Vat. lat. 5729, ff. 227r, 342r; BNF, MS. lat. 6 (2), f. 129v; (3), ff. 91r, 97v, 134r, 144r, 145r, 145v; (4), f. 106r.

<sup>67</sup> ASIL, Ms. III. 1, f. 131v.

<sup>68</sup> One of the ivory plaques of the reliquary of San Aemilian offers yet another example of a knight represented *a la brida* and wearing a chainmail hauberk. The production of the piece in question has been ascribed to the monastery of San Millán de la Cogolla *ca.* A.D. 1060-80. These features can be contextualised by the marked French influence that is patent in this piece, which was also possibly carved by French artisans. For image and description, see O’Neill 1993, pp. 12, 260-266, cat. n.º 125.



Fig. 3. © PT/TT/MSML/44, Ordem de Cister, Mosteiro de Lorrain, códice 44, f. 115r. Lorrain Beatus, Rider with bow and arrow (image provided by ANTT).

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Analysing the modes of representation in manuscript illumination not only provides an overview of the evolution of figural art in the Iberian Peninsula but also offers important insight into transformations in its visual and material cultures. Despite earlier interactions between Iberia and other parts of Europe<sup>69</sup>, the most conspicuous transformations are detected from the final decades of the eleventh century onwards<sup>70</sup>. The official adoption of the Roman Rite in A.D. 1080 unquestionably marked a watershed in the process, leading to a greater exposure of the Peninsula to new trends and customs: it is indeed striking how close to this date changes of the sort discussed here can first be observed. Across the board, the remarkable variety in dress that reflected the idiosyncratic nature of early medieval Iberia seems to disappear from the pictorial repertoire,

<sup>69</sup> Williams 1994a, pp. 93-94.

<sup>70</sup> As also argued by Walker 2015, p. 79.

giving way to a more uniform attire. Although extant material and documentary evidence indicates the survival of some traditional Iberian dress types in later centuries<sup>71</sup>, garb that reflected Islamic influences seems to have faded away from manuscript illumination. This is particularly conspicuous in the representations of horsemen and knights whose attire changed radically, and to which new elements were introduced. Henceforth, Iberian modes of representation became almost indistinguishable from what is visible in contemporary French visual sources<sup>72</sup>.

By the same token, significant changes in the depiction of knights and their riding styles can first be observed in the extant Iberian manuscripts from the beginning of the twelfth century. Here political developments may provide further contextualisation: the alliances forged between Iberian and French royal and comital families (the marriages between the daughters of Alfonso VI and Raymond and Henry of Burgundy, as well as his own marriage to Constance of Burgundy, niece of Hugh of Cluny, being cases in point) strengthened international relations, contributing to cosmopolitan connections<sup>73</sup>. While the extent of the influx of foreign knights into Iberia during the “Reconquista” remains uncertain, considering the extant visual evidence we may reasonably assume that new practices and accoutrements found their way into the Peninsula where they seem to have been adopted to suit the new requirements of heavy cavalry<sup>74</sup>. Overall, the broader context thus likewise highlights the turn of the eleventh to the twelfth century as a period marked by the growing exposure to, and assimilation of, various aspects of trans-Pyrenean culture, which reshaped local traditions<sup>75</sup>.

The particular changes in figural representation I have highlighted raise important questions: were these striking transformations in manuscript illustrations motivated by the new requirements of the ecclesiastic reform, were they prompted by the access to new iconographic models introduced to the Peninsula at this stage, or were they a result of progressive change in the local social-cultural behaviour which informed visual culture? Were they even the consequences of some or all these factors combined? While changes to script type as well as to liturgical and monastic customs were mandated as part of the ecclesiastical reform, there is no concrete evidence for similar

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<sup>71</sup> Concerning the continuity of some types of traditional dress and the use of Muslim fabrics and designs by Iberian Christians in later periods, see Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 19; Martínez 2012.

<sup>72</sup> Concerning the decreasing influence of Islamic style in Iberian medieval art and the progressive adoption of French models, see Williams 1993b, p. 22.

<sup>73</sup> Bishko 1980, pp. 1-3. On the specific influence in horsemanship, see Pereira 2001, p. 119; Powers 1988, pp. 132-133.

<sup>74</sup> As also suggested by Powers 1988, pp. 132-133; Reilly 1988, p. 376.

<sup>75</sup> Bernis Madrazo 1956, p. 19; Williams 1993b, p. 22; Walker 2015, p. 79.

strictures in relation to book illumination. There is, however, evidence that, directly or indirectly, the reform promoted a new repertoire of models and iconographic programmes in Iberia, which facilitated the introduction of new artistic conventions, not to mention of foreign professionals<sup>76</sup>. Representations of armoured knights, as *milites Christi* battling the enemy, seem to have been amongst these, having enjoyed considerable popularity in secular and religious monumental art during this period of transition. This phenomenon has been justified by Arturo Quintavalle as a reference to the physical and spiritual battle against Islam, which had gained new impetus, being then waged on western as well as on eastern frontiers<sup>77</sup>. However, while the apparent popularity of this theme across the medieval West may have contributed to a shift in the knightly image in Iberian visual culture, the representations found in this context do not seem to have, at least *prima facie*, evident ideological connotations, as both the good knights and evil horsemen are, to a greater or lesser extent, portrayed alike (wearing similar garb and riding in identical fashion) in several illuminated manuscripts and other artistic media<sup>78</sup>.

If we consider the origin and background of the scribes and illuminators responsible for the production of these manuscripts, the information preserved in their colophons is, sadly, not very revealing, as little is presented regarding illuminators in post-1100 manuscripts. The Silos *Beatus* is one of the few exceptions, offering us the illuminator's name, Petrus, and his ecclesiastical status, prior, but telling us nothing about his background<sup>79</sup>. Again, there is no concrete documentary evidence that foreign secular professionals, whom one would expect to have been more open than cloistered monks to changes in the world around them, were involved in the execution of these works<sup>80</sup>.

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<sup>76</sup> Quintavalle 2015; Walker 1998, pp. 194-196; 2015; 2016, pp. 305, 310; Williams 1998, p. 22.

<sup>77</sup> Quintavalle 2015, pp. 33-34. It was also at this stage that Calixtus II (d. A.D. 1124) and, subsequently, Diego Gelmírez, archbishop of Compostela (d. ca. 1140), declared that the military action of the Christian kingdoms of Iberia should be envisaged as a crusade; see Fletcher 2013, pp. 80-83.

<sup>78</sup> As seen in the Arroyo *Beatus* (BNF, nouv. acq. lat. 2290) in which the Antichrist (f. 106v) and other evil agents (f. 157v) are represented as armoured knights and foot soldiers. The same approach is found in the Cardena *Beatus* (MAN, MS. 2, f. 106r). It is also believed that the south-side capital in the palace of the dukes of Granada in Navarre presents a Christian and a Muslim knight in combat, possibly Roland and Ferragut. They are, however, represented in identical fashion and both ride their horses *a la brida*. Only their shields differentiate them: the circular one has been associated with Islam and the kite-shaped one with Christianity. On this subject, see also Powers 1988, p. 130 (plate 14).

<sup>79</sup> Concerning the craftsmen of the Silos *Beatus*, see Williams 2002, pp. 31-40.

<sup>80</sup> See Yarza Luaces 2007, pp. 69-76. Despite having been produced in the *scriptorium* of San Isidoro at León, the *Second Bible of León* may be an exception to this trend. Hernández Ferreirós 2016b, pp. 144-150 has argued that the Bible was possibly illuminated by an itinerant group of secular artists due to the stylistic similarities between its miniatures and the wall

Accordingly, assessing the motivations that led to these particular changes is difficult and interpretations have to be tentative. There is insufficient evidence to establish whether these illuminators were responding to changes in artistic conventions as part of a newly inherited visual tradition, or whether they had empirical knowledge of these transformations in everyday life. While it is plausible that they engaged with iconographic models which conveyed these new pictorial trends<sup>81</sup>, the detailed nature of these changes, especially horse-riding techniques, may also suggest exposure to, and occasional understanding of, “real-world” practices<sup>82</sup>. The Silos *Beatus* is, once again, a case in point: while recalling the aesthetics and the script of the earlier tradition (showing greater affinity with tenth-century Castilian manuscripts than with its coeval counterparts<sup>83</sup>), this manuscript includes knights depicted with chainmail hauberks, conical helmets with nasal guards, and riding with straight legs *a la brida*: that is, reflecting the practices and the impedimenta observed in trans-Pyrenean pictorial sources, which seems to have become current in Iberia from the early twelfth century onwards<sup>84</sup>. If illuminators were responding to “real-world” experience, it is difficult to establish how exactly they had access to this new and highly specific information and, perhaps most importantly, what may have motivated such evident iconographic changes. While it is reasonable to assume that there were strong connections between monasteries and the militia during the “Reconquista”<sup>85</sup>, and hence that monastic communities (and presumably their scribes and artists, such as *Petrus* of Silos) may have been more acquainted with military equipment than perhaps expected<sup>86</sup>, the exact

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paintings in a church in Roda de Isábena. Additionally, Walker 1998, p. 57 does not reject the possibility that the *scriptorium* of Santo Domingo of Silos may have also welcomed foreign scribes and artists.

<sup>81</sup> On the arrival of foreign manuscripts in the Peninsula in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, especially the offering of the Cluniac illuminated copy of Ildephonsus of Toledo’s *De Virginitate Sanctae Mariae* (BPP, Ms. lat. 1650) to Alfonso VI, see Yarza Luaces 2007, pp. 70-74. Concerning the possible work of foreign scribes and illuminators in Iberia, see Walker 1998, pp. 192-196.

<sup>82</sup> Evidence of ecclesiastic book makers engaging with the world outside the monastery walls is offered in the colophon of the *Second Bible* of León, in which the scribe stated that one of the members of the community had travelled to France to obtain high-quality parchment for the commission in question, see O’Neill 1993, p. 297.

<sup>83</sup> Schapiro 1939, pp. 313-314, 317; Williams 2002, pp. 31-40.

<sup>84</sup> Pereira 2001, p. 89; Powers 1988, pp. 132-133. For other pictorial elements which demonstrate French influence in the scriptorium of Silos, see Boylan 1990.

<sup>85</sup> Concerning the close relationship between medieval monastic communities and the military world, see Smith 2011, pp. 39-71, 197-199.

<sup>86</sup> Evidence for the understanding of the military dynamics of their time by Iberian monastic houses is yielded in the colophon of the tenth-century Girona *Beatus*, which states that the manuscript was completed when Fredenando Flaginiz was fighting the moors in Toledo –MCG, Num. Inv. 7 (11), f. 284r. Smith proposes that these connections were strengthened in the

nature of these connections has yet to be adequately explored. The balance of probabilities, giving appropriate weight to the detail in the imagery examined, suggests that, while the reform may have been a trigger for these material and cultural transformations through the introduction of new iconographic models, personnel and customs, at least some scribes and illuminators had had first-hand experience of the material and martial world in question.

Similarly to what is observed in relation to the system of Iberian scripts in this period –which reflects not just mechanical and practical transitions, but also cultural and ideological ones– visual sources, especially illuminated manuscripts, offer a fertile ground for reflection on the profound changes that occurred in the aftermath of the liturgical reform. These go beyond artistic idioms to details of material culture of when they were produced, reflecting a turning point in the history of the medieval West, and characterised not only by the religious and cultural unification of the medieval West but also the devitalisation of native Iberian traditions.

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eleventh and twelfth centuries in light of the ecclesiastical reform and of the crusades in the east, see Smith 2011, p. 197.



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